

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Claims 1 and 4-9 have been amended, and claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled.

A listing of the claims follows and replaces all prior listing of the claims.

## **LISTING OF THE CLAIMS**

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A lubricant composition, ~~characterized by~~ comprising:

a lubricant;[[,]] and

buffer particles which have a spherical shape, which have having an average particle diameter  $D_1$  of  $50\mu\text{m} < D_1 \leq 300\mu\text{m}$ , and which are comprised of a buffering material whose Young's modulus ranges from 0.1 to  $10^4$ MPa.

Claims 2 and 3 (Cancelled).

Claim 4 (Currently amended): The lubricant composition according to claim 1, wherein the buffering material of the buffer particles is comprised of ~~are formed of~~ a cured material of curable urethane resin.

Claim 5 (Currently amended): The lubricant composition according to claim 1, wherein the lubricant composition has a mixing ratio of the buffer particles to the lubricant which ranges from is 20 to 300 parts by weight of buffer particles per 100 parts by weight of the lubricant.

Claim 6 (Currently amended): The lubricant composition according to claim 1, wherein ~~the lubricant is grease is used as the lubricant, and the~~ having a consistency thereof in a state where the buffer particles are added thereto is that is given by an NLGI number which ranges from No. 2 to No. 000 in terms of an NLGI number.

Claim 7 (Currently amended): The lubricant composition according to claim 1, wherein ~~the lubricant is lubricating oil is used as the lubricant, and the~~ having a kinetic viscosity thereof is which ranges from 5 to 200 mm<sup>2</sup>/s (40°C).

Claim 8 (Currently amended): A speed reduction gear, ~~characterized by comprising:~~  
a small gear and a large gear[[,]] that define an area when engaged which includes and in that an area including an engaged portion of both the small gear and the large gear gears and which is filled with the lubricant composition of claim 1.

Claim 9 (Currently amended): An electric power steering apparatus, comprising:  
~~characterized in that an output of~~  
an electric motor for steering assist which has an output that is transmitted to a steering mechanism by reducing its speed through the speed reduction gear of claim 8.